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WASHINGTON (AP) — A U.S. government agency is demanding that Iran release seven Baha'i prisoners rather than submit them to trials on charges of spying for Israel and religious charges.

The **U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom** is responding to a plea from Roxana Saberi, an Iranian-American journalist who spent almost four months in an Iranian jail, was convicted of spying for the United States, then expelled. Saberi says two of the Baha'is were her cellmates.

In her letter to the USCIRF, Saberi says intercession on behalf of the Baha'is would show Iranian authorities that "the Iranian people's human rights are a matter of international concern."